

INFOCUS

The Official Publication of The Jamaican Canadian Association

FEBRUARY ISSUE 2016



**BLACK
HISTORY
MONTH**



JAMAICAN CANADIAN ASSOCIATION WOMEN'S COMMITTEE
PRESENTS



INTERNATIONAL WOMEN'S DAY CELEBRATION 2016

"WOMEN RECOGNIZING WOMEN"

Sunday March 13, 2016

2-5PM | ADM \$40



Keynote Speaker: **Dr. Karen Redwood.**

THEME: **PLEDGE FOR PARITY**
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JCA Interim-President Maureen Ennis

Dear Readers,

As many of you know, since January 11, 2016 I have been interim president due to Barrington Coke's retirement from the JCA Board. I thank Mr. Coke for his contributions as President and offer my appreciation for his ongoing contributions to the Board in his new capacity as immediate past president.

My first order of business as interim president was to develop a work plan to address a number of outstanding matters. I thank each Board member for the hard work and commitment they have demonstrated as we seek to deal with our list of priority items via a series of special Board meetings.

It has been an honour to serve thus far and I look forward to providing more updates in the future.

As February is Black History Month please enjoy the column written by MPP Granville Anderson. We appreciate MPP Anderson for sharing his thoughts on the recent legislative changes.

Sincerely,

Maureen A. Ennis

Ontario Passes Legislation Making February Black History Month

By Granville Anderson
MPP – Durham

I am so pleased to be part of a government that has chosen to formally recognize February as Black History Month on an annual basis.

Ontario first proclaimed February as Black History Month in 1993, to mark the 200th anniversary of a law banning the importation of slaves into Upper Canada. Since then, we have continued to celebrate, but the month has not had official status.

Our new legislation formalizes this in perpetuity.

This is the result of the leadership and dedication of many in our caucus, including our Premier, who felt it important to give this month its due prestige and honour.

I am personally grateful for this, because it reinforces the pride and satisfaction I have about the many important contributions the Black community has made to Ontario’s cultural, political and economic landscape. And, it ensures the uniqueness, vitality and continuing contributions of the Black community in Ontario will be celebrated for generations to come.

We have so many examples of the contributions made to Ontario by people from the Caribbean and African Diaspora. I personally think of Lincoln Alexander, the first Black MP, the first Black cabinet minister, and the first Black Lieutenant Governor of Ontario. And I think of Leonard Braithwaite, the first Black MPP, elected in 1963, helping pave the way for me to sit in the Legislature today. I also think of Alvin Curling, who spent 20 years at Queen’s Park as MPP before taking on a diplomatic role.

MPP Granville Anderson
Black History Month—Cont’d

These and many more exemplary Black Ontarians have contributed to building a stronger province and a stronger country, honouring our heritage and making Canada proud.

Actions like officially preserving the tradition of February as Black History Month in law give me great confidence that our future generations will also pause to recognize and reflect upon the important contributions of the Black community.

Solidifying this tradition allows us to honour those who came before us, and pay tribute to their legacy. I hope you will pause this month to do just that.





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THE JCA ELECTIONS!!!

**2016 CALL FOR THE JCA
BOARD MEMBERS RECRUITMENT**

ACCEPTING APPLICATIONS NOW TILL MARCH 21, 2016

Expressions of interest are invited from individuals with knowledge of one or more areas of Board governance, inclusive of: strategic planning, policy and program development, finance and human resource management, communication skills, legal systems and political acumen; within a member-driven or service organization.

OPEN POSITIONS

President, Director of Fundraising, Treasurer and Secretary

Information Session: March 5, 2016 @ 12 Noon

Interview Period: April 4-25, 2016

ELECTION DATE: May 29, 2016

FOR FURTHER DETAILS CONTACT

The Nominations Committee @ jcaboardinfo@gmail.com

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Walk Good

I am delighted to once again organize this event as it is a tremendous opportunity for us as a community to come together to raise funds...for us ALL. The JCA is proud to take the lead in working with all of the community partners.

We encourage everyone who cares about the work that is being done and the work still to be done to GET INVOLVED and Walk with us on Sunday May 1st 2016.

Registration starts at 8:00 a.m

Opening Remarks at 9:45 a.m.

The walk begins at 10:00 a.m. sharp (rain or shine)

See you all soon and keep collecting those pledges!



5k or 10k Routes
Walk, Jog, Run or Cycle!
Prizes | Surprises | Refreshments!

Pledge forms are available from
the Jamaican Canadian Association or online
Get in touch with us at 906740-5712 or Sandra Whiting/Chair 906 573-1375



WALK GOOD SUNDAY MAY 1,2016

Dear JCA Members & Friends of JCA

WALK GOOD SUNDAY MAY 1,2016

Registration starts at 8:00 a.m. Opening Remarks at 9:45 a.m. The walk begins at 10:00 a.m. sharp (rain or shine)

We need to get **RE-ENERGIZED!!** We need to get ready to **PUT ON OUR WALKING SHOES** for 2016.

There is no question in my mind that if each and every member seriously planned to give or get friends or family to contribute even \$50.00 each we could make a significant impact. Do the math Ladies & Gentlemen -it's strictly math.

The more we collect; the more we reach and even surpass our goal. So for example 300 members at \$50.00 each is **\$15,000.00**. Ask a friend or friends for another \$50.00 and we are at **\$30,000.00**

We have 151 days to go from Dec 1st.think about it if we started putting a \$1.00 a day in a little savings pan we could do it. Then that would be $151.00 \times 300 \text{ members} = \$45,300.00!!$

Just do the math. Make a commitment. And let's hit our targets in 2016. It cannot be done without you and we can all ask fren and family fe help!!

We mus do better in 2016. I am delighted to once again organize this event as it is a tremendous opportunity for us as a community to come together to raise funds...for us ALL. The JCA is proud to take the lead in working with all of the community partners.

See you all soon and keep collecting those pledges!

P.S WE ARE also LOOKING FOR enthusiastic individuals who agree to become JCA ambassadors to raise a minimum of \$500 – prizes & surprises!!

Sandra Whiting Associates (416) 573-1375 h/w (647) 693-2724 sandrawhiting.ca

Grand Market 2015, so many choices for last minute xmas shopping.



Grand Market 2015, vendors getting ready and setting up



MEMBERSHIP SERVICES CORNER

EVENTS UPDATE

Thank you very much four your generous support of the Jamaican Canadian Association

The Children's Christmas Party

We certainly had another great success! It was well attended despite cutbacks this year. We had excitement and challenges. This year we had an increase in our registration. Velma and Janet coordinated the maze made of connecting paths. The committee gave it their all. Job well done! We entertained approximately 140 wide eyed smiling children. A Big Thank you to our donors who came through for us, and our dedicated committee members who assisted in throwing in funds to assist with the cause. Mr. & Mrs. Clause is on their way back to the North Pole.

Our sincere sympathies to bereaved families of our members and our heartfelt good wishes for a speedy recovery to those members who are ill or on the road to recovery. We continue to provide support to members and their families throughout their difficult periods and ask you all to keep them in your prayers.

VOLUNTEER NEEDED!

The membership committee needs volunteers who are committed and dedicated individuals to execute membership services for JCA. Please do your part by signing up at least five to ten members from your circle of friends and family and enter a draw to win a prize at the next Annual General Meeting taking place on May 29th.

Congratulations to the all our new members and their families who joined the Association within this period and hope you will take an active roll into the organization.

PLEASE MARK YOUR CALENDAR as we roll into spring & summer

UPCOMING EVENTS:

JCA Open House - TBA

Sunday, July 17th Annual Family Day Picnic to Victoria Park, (Cobourg, Ontario) Please see flyers for more information. **Bus tickets are Selling Quickly - Buy now to secure your seat!**

Sunday, July 31, JCA Flag Raising Ceremony @ City Hall – 2:00pm FREE FREE
And hoping to see you there!

MEMBERSHIP SERVICES CORNER

EVENTS UPDATE

Thank you very much four your generous support of the Jamaican Canadian Association

JCA 2015 Grand Market

The JCA held its 1st Annual Grand Christmas Market which was held over two days on December 23 & 24 from 12PM-12AM on both days. It was good to see many people come together regardless of their age to enjoy a Jamaican tradition. Many people took the opportunity to do some last-minute shopping.

As most of you are aware, traditionally, Grand Market is a community fair characterized by food, street dancing, music, vendors selling their products, and customers buy the products.

For Grand Market 2015, the Grand Market committee consisted of the membership and Building Committee members. We added Jamaican content to the event by having Jonkanoo performers as part of the entertainment, because Jonkanoo is a Jamaican tradition. Along with Jonkanoo dancers, there were performances by local artists, and a special appearance by Santa Claus.

A special thank you to members of the Grand Market committee, volunteers, and to those individuals who generously donated to the event. The feedback from the community was very positive.

Front Room

At the JCA, 995 Arrow Road, Toronto

If you haven't seen Front Room you have missed an evening of fun, entertainment and truly Jamaican theatre. If you have seen it already here is your chance to see it again, likely for the last time this theatre season.

Front Room is a play written by noted Jamaican playwright Aston Cooke and produced in Toronto by popular actress, comedienne, MC and performer Marcia Brown. Marcia has kindly and generously offered this production as a fundraiser for the Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA). We ask you to support us. Come and see this play.

The JCA is a self sustaining organization that is now in its 54th year in the GTA. It was established to champion the causes of the newly arriving immigrants from Jamaica, the Caribbean and elsewhere who were experiencing challenges as they adapted to a new society and as they encountered unexpected and unreasonable barriers. The JCA advocated assiduously to eliminate or reduce immigration barriers, housing and employment discrimination due to race or gender, unfair and unjust treatment by police and the justice system, equal access to promotion opportunities based on merit, and a level playing field for children in the education system which enables them to have better career choices.

In addition to its advocacy the JCA established a Social Service Agency to assist families and youth; provides scholarships to college and university applicants and operates the Saturday Morning Tutorial Program for elementary students.

The JCA does not get government funding to advocate against undesired government policies and laws. Therefore, the JCA must depend on the communities it serves to provide financial support. This is what we are now asking. Come out in droves. Bring others with you. Not only will you enjoy your evening you will be supporting an organization that supports you. We need your help.



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Marcia **B**rown **P**roductions PRESENT



ONE SPECTACULAR "MATINEE" BENEFIT PERFORMANCE
OF ASTON COOKE'S COMPELLING COMEDY DRAMA

FRONT ROOM



Starring: Marcia Brown, Naggo Morris, Letna Allen-Rowe, Damian Brown, Adrea Smith, Michael Scott, Stacy-Ann Buchanan & Heather Norman

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ALL PROCEEDS FROM THIS PERFORMANCE WILL BENEFIT THE JCA www.jcaontario.org

Thank You !

The JCA extends a big thank you to Mr. Mike James, Teacher in the Math department and the entire team at George S. Henry Academy in North York.

Their giving hearts provided a generous contribution to the Jamaican Canadian Association (JCA) Annual Scholarship Fund. See their letter we have shared.

**jerk
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Jamaican Canadian Association
995 Arrow Road
Toronto, Ontario
M9M 2Z5

To Whom It May Concern:

JAN 28 2016

Re: Attached cheque for \$532.81

The above mentioned funds were acquired through a dress down day that our school's African Caribbean Club held at George S. Henry Academy, to fund various community projects.

We've chosen to contribute the above amount to an educational fund related to the Jamaican Canadian Association of your choosing and hope this will be useful to you. We thank you for your involvement in this community and the good work you are doing there.

Sincerely,

Michael James
Teacher, Math Department
Staff Advisor

Coming May 1st 2016 !!!



Children's Christmas Party—Santa made many wishes come true !!



Amy Nelson c/o Society of Senior Citizens Organizations (OSSCO)

It is almost impossible to remember a time when the Ontario Society of Senior Citizens Organizations (OSSCO) did not have the support of the JCA and its most visible member Amy Nelson. Sadly, Amy Nelson retired from our board this January after more than 20 years of commitment to us.

I have the pleasure of knowing “Miss Amy” for the past 4 years. Ontarians unknowingly benefitted from her influence. She created the multicultural lens for the Society and others. The Multicultural Fairs which were her vision evolved into OSSCO’s Signature event, the annual Seniors Conference and Information Fair.

During Amy’s time on the board, she saw various governments change, participated in influencing them and always carried the voice and perspective of Caribbean seniors to the foreground.

OSSCO was Amy’s last commitment to leadership and oversight of an organization. Shortly after I joined OSSCO, Amy gave up her leadership role on the Caribbean Seniors Club, aware that it was time for a younger generation to lead. She continued on our Financial Committee, questioning our expenditures every time we met. It was during those meetings that I learned more about Amy’s influence and guidance not just on the JCA but on the Canadian social fabric.

A nurse by training who emigrated from Jamaica, Amy broke new ground wherever she went. Her leadership role in ophthalmology surgery at her hospital opened new doors for others to follow. The doctors she worked with insisted that if Amy could not join them professionally or socially because of her color that they would take their business elsewhere. She educated everyone on the importance of humanity and gave lessons on humility.

Amy gave her life to service through volunteering while working fulltime and raising her family. She helped the JCA become what it is today. She organized and led surgical field trips around the world so that others would enjoy the gift of sight. The best way I can describe Amy is that she helped all of us see that we could and should make life better for ourselves and generations to come.

We will miss her strength and vision, her encouragement and teachings. As OSSCO’s board of directors stated, “we greatly appreciated Miss Amy’s commitment and dedication and thank her for her contributions on our board and OSSCO’s activities”.

I know that all of us wish Amy all the best in her retirement years.

Elizabeth Nykorowytch Macnab, BA, CHRP, Executive Director

Ontario Society of Senior Citizen’s Organizations/ *La Société des Organisations des Citoyens Aînés de l’Ontario*

333 Wilson Ave. Suite 406, Toronto, ON M3H 1T2 416-785-8570 Toll Free 1-800-265-0779 Fax 416-785-7361

Amy Nelson and some of her activities



Lydia Sun was one of OSSCO's computer instructors



Amy with former OSSCO board chair Carolyn Fernandes, Vice-chair Roslyn Harris, John Morency



Former OSSCO chair John Morency with Amy.



Amy & Kathleen Gordon pausing from helping at annual Seniors Conference.

Loy Manning, JCA, Deborah Spencer, Mr. Green & Amy Nelson Bd member

Ms. Opal Austin thanks the community for the love and support [#Rally4Opal](#)

With the conclusion of the Everton Biddersingh trial, please remember and support Opal Austin. The Opal Austin GoFundMe remains open.

Web link to donate: <https://www.gofundme.com/Rally4Opal>

The Jamaican Consulate will also be accepting donations on the family's behalf.

Contact them at <http://congenjamaica-toronto.com>

Royson James wrote recently that Opal was at the hospital with concerns that she had a mild heart attack on the day that Everton Biddersingh was sentenced.

(<http://www.thestar.com/news/gta/2016/02/08/everton-biddersingh-sentenced-to-life-in-prison-for-suitcase-murder.html>)



Ms. Opal Austin seated, with Mr. Michael Thompson (Toronto city councillor), Mr. Royson James (columnist of the Toronto Star), and Mr. Lloyd Wilks, (Jamaica's Consul General to Toronto) from left to right.

Inventor Elijah McCoy (1843–1929)

Black Inventor Elijah McCoy (1843–1929)

Elijah McCoy was born in 1843, in Colchester, Ontario. His parents, George and Mildred (Goins) McCoy, were former slaves who had escaped to Canada using the underground railroad. McCoy studied engineering in Scotland and worked as fireman and oiler at the Michigan Central Railroad. His training as an engineer helped him identify and solve the problems of engine lubrication and overheating. In 1872, he invented an automatic lubricator for locomotive steam engines and obtained his first patent. Lubricators helped trains run more efficiently because there was less need to stop for maintenance.

Author Booker T. Washington acknowledged him in *Story of the Negro* (1909) as having the record for the most patents held by a Black man up until that time. As a result, McCoy became a celebrated figure within the Black community. McCoy was a prolific inventor and by the end of his life, he held 57 patents. Although he lacked funding to properly capitalize from the manufacturing of his lubricators, he did sell his patent rights to his employers or investors. The Michigan Central Railroad employed him as an instructor in the use of his new inventions and later he became a consultant to the railroad industry on patent matters. Towards the end of his career, lubricators with the official McCoy name were manufactured in 1920 when he established the Elijah McCoy Manufacturing Company.

The city of Detroit celebrated Elijah McCoy Day in 1975. A historic marker can be found at the site of his home a street is named after him. The National Inventors Hall of Fame in Akron, Ohio inducted him in 2001. His remains are interred at Detroit Memorial Park East in Warren, Michigan.

He was and still is and will always be the Real McCoy !!



Meet The Board 2015 - 2016 Board of Directors

Maureen Ennis - Interim President

Leo Campbell - Interim Vice President

Barry Coke - Immediate Past President

Tanya Chin - Secretary

Roy Williams - Treasurer

Cheryl-Ann Ewan - Director of Fundraising

Alton Brooks - Director of Communication

Joycelyn De Souza - Director At Large / SMTP, Women's Committee

Chris Campbell - Director At Large/ In charge of Operations

Everton Gordon - Interim Chief Executive Officer of JCA

Maureen Henry - Executive Secretary CAFCAN

